

"I have wandered up and down
All the village paths for you;
But you're so very proud I
Awake or asleep I see but you;
Nor after death shall I give up.
I'll give up all I have for you
O Maiden of Karnataka!"

There is perhaps not much humour
in the sentiment*
More of it is in the dialect used in
the song and the
ludicrous tune to which the words
are set. Both are
lost in translation.

A humorous song of the Malnad
is a dialogue
between a Vaishnava mendicant and
an enquirer. The
enquirer asks the mendicant—
Dasaiya—where he gets
his coffee, bread, milk, etc. The
Dasaiya answers very
promptly in nonsense rhyme. It may
be rendered as
follows in English; not, of course, in
strict translation.
The first word parodies the
beginning of Vaishnava
songs, "Gari" being used in place
of "Hari":

"Gari Gari Gari Gari Narayana
Gari Narayana Gari Narayana
Gari Gari Gari Gari Dasaiya
Where did you have your coffee, Sir?"
"Mistress Coffam there sells coffee
Coffam coffee there I got."
"Coffee's right; well, where was bread and
Where was butter, if you please, Sir?"
"You know good Mistress Butter makes
bread;
Butter, bread, both I got there."

The song thus goes on
completing all the gamut
of the day's needs. When the song
began, I thought
that "Gari" was a mistake for
"Hari" and told the
singer. The assembly, however,
laughed and the singer